

NCA  
VOC FOR IOP/FN  
NEWS ANALYSIS NO. 1-0993  
CHARLES MEDD

JUNE 23, 1976

## 1976 AND THE THIRD PARTY CHOICES

ANNCR:

WHOEVER THE DEMOCRATS AND THE REPUBLICANS CHOOSE AS PARTY CANDIDATES, THEIRS WILL NOT BE THE ONLY NAMES ON THIS YEAR'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION BALLOTS. ONCE MORE, THE SO-CALLED THIRD PARTIES ARE IN THE RUNNING, AND CHARLES MEDD HAS SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SUBJECT.

VOICE:

SINCE THE EIGHTEEN FIFTIES, WHEN THE REPUBLICANS EMERGED AS PERMANENT RIVALS TO THE OLDER DEMOCRATS, THIRD PARTIES HAVE COME AND GONE -- NOT SO MUCH TO WIN ELECTIONS AS TO REGISTER A PROTEST OR BACK A CAUSE. (OPT) A PARTIAL LIST FROM THE PAST INCLUDES THE GREENBACKS, WHO SOUGHT NINETEENTH CENTURY CURRENCY REFORM; THE PROHIBITIONISTS, WHO WANTED TO STOP THE MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES; THE SOCIALISTS, THE PROGRESSIVES AND, MORE RECENTLY, THE DIXIECRATS, SOUTHERN DEMOCRATS WHO VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED THE EARLY CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT. (END OPT)

IF WINNING HAD BEEN THE REAL OBJECTIVE, THIRD PARTIES WOULD HAVE LONG AGO GONE OUT OF BUSINESS. SOME HAVE INDEED LEFT THEIR MARK ON THE BODY POLITIC AS THEIR OBJECTIVES AND OFTEN THEIR MEMBERS WERE ABSORBED BY THE MAJOR PARTIES. BUT MOSTLY THIRD PARTIES HAVE BEEN CONTENT TO DO WHAT ALABAMA'S GEORGE WALLACE SAID HE WAS DOING IN 1968 -- OFFERING THE VOTERS ANOTHER CHOICE. AND THIS YEAR IS NO EXCEPTION.

THE NOVEMBER BALLOTS WILL INCLUDE THE NAME THOMAS ANDERSON, PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR THE ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE AMERICAN PARTY. MISTER ANDERSON AND HIS FOLLOWERS -- NUMBERING PERHAPS SOME ONE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND -- WOULD DO AWAY WITH PRACTICALLY

ALL MODERN SOCIAL REFORMS FROM PUBLIC WELFARE TO THE GRADUATED INCOME TAX. THE AMERICAN PARTY VIEWS MOST ACKNOWLEDGED CONSERVATIVES AS TOO LIBERAL, MOST LIBERALS AS VIRTUAL IF NOT REAL COMMUNISTS, AND ITS MEMBERS EXPRESS ALARM AS WHAT THEY SEE AS A DANGEROUS NATIONAL DRIFT TOWARD COMMUNISM.

SUCH FEARS NO DOUBT COME AS A SURPRISE TO STILL ANOTHER THIRD PARTY CANDIDATE -- GUS HALL, THE PERENNIAL CHOICE OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNIST PARTY. IN THE 1972 ELECTION HE COLLECTED JUST TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND VOTES, OR A FRACTION OF ONE PER CENT OF ALL THOSE CAST. AT HIS PARTY'S RECENT NOMINATING CONVENTION, MISTER HALL SPOKE NOT ABOUT VICTORY BUT ABOUT THE VIRTUES OF DETENTE, SOUNDING THEMES THE NEW YORK TIMES DESCRIBED AS SIMILAR TO THOSE FOUND IN THE SOVIET PRESS.

ALTHOUGH FEW THINGS ARE CERTAIN IN POLITICS, IT'S SAFE TO ASSUME THAT NEITHER THE AMERICAN PARTY NOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY WILL HAVE MUCH OF AN IMPACT ON THIS YEAR'S ELECTION. FOR WHILE THE TWO PARTIES ARE AT THE OPPOSITE EXTREMES OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM, THEY ARE SIMILARLY OUT OF STEP WITH THE TIMES. THE AMERICAN PARTY CLEARLY LOOKS TO THE DISTANT PAST FOR ITS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VALUES, WHILE THE COMMUNIST PARTY, AS IT HAS FOR THE PAST FIFTY YEARS, STILL LOOKS TO MOSCOW. MOST VOTERS, OF COURSE, ARE LOOKING ELSEWHERE.

-0-

GH/PY